

The CHRISTIAN MINISTER, or faithful  
Preacher of the Gospel described.

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# • S E R M O N :

DELIVERED AT THE ORDINATION OF THE REV. MRS.

MR. JOEL BENEDICT,

At NEWENT, in NORWICH,

ON THE 21ST OF FEBRUARY, 1771.

By LEVI HART, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE SECOND CHURCH IN PRESTON.

ALSO THE C H A R G E

GIVEN BY THE REV. MR. ROSSETER, OF PRESTON;

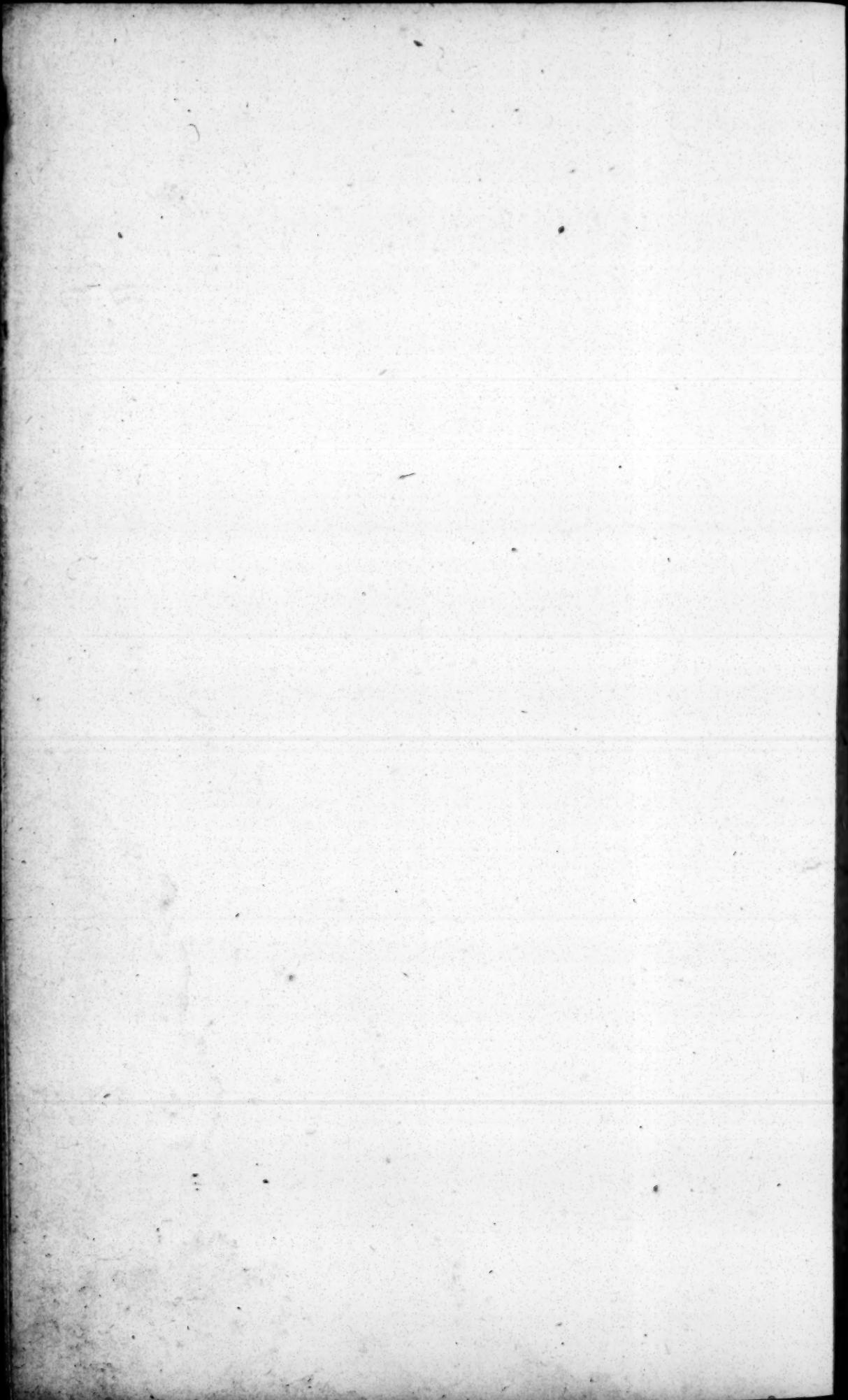
And the RIGHT-HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

GIVEN BY THE REV. MR. BURROUGHS, OF KILLINGLY.

Published at the general Desire of the People.

P W - L O N D O N :

by TIMOTHY GREEN, 1771.





A C T S XX. 25, 26, 27.

*And now I know that ye all among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more.*

*Wherfore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men.*

*For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*

AMONG the various objects which engage the attention of man, none are of equal importance with the concerns of religion, and another world: and even among these it is not easy to find any of such moment as the serious transactions between a christian minister, and the people of his charge, and the most serious and affecting part in this most weighty and interesting affair, is the final separation of the pastor from his flock.

Of this nature was our Apostle's business at this time with the elders of the Church at Ephesus. He had, heretofore, spent considerable time in testifying the gospel of God's grace, in that city, to all who would hear him, and he had not been without some happy success: Some of those who had been his

*hearers,*

hearers, were now become elders of the church which was erected in that place. These our Apostle had sent for, as he was journeying in those parts, to meet him in the neighbourhood of that city, being desirous to see them, and to give and receive *a last farewell*, as he was sensible of his approaching end, and that they should see his face no more.

Accordingly, having met with them, and briefly touched upon the most considerable branches of his preaching and ministerial labours among them—having warned, and directed them to a faithful discharge of their holy calling; that they should take heed to themselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy-Ghost had made them overseers, (or bishops) he prayed with, and parted from them, in a most serious and affectionate manner. The words of our text are a part of this solemn farewell address.

And as every gospel minister has a solemn transaction of this nature to pass through, it can never be improper for such to keep in view these words of the Apostle; especially should they be suitably noticed by the ministers of Christ at their entering upon, or being concerned in, the introduction of any of their brethren to the work of the ministry.

Such is the connection between our engaging in this work, and our final separation from the people of our charge, and such the solemnity of the present occasion, that I need make

no apology for chusing those words for the subject of our present meditation.

I propose then to pass over whatever else might be pertinently adduced from the text, and only take a brief view of the character of a christian minister, or faithful preacher of the gospel. This I shall attempt by the induction of several particulars, and then shut up the discourse with a practical improvement.

The *counsel* of God spoken of in our text pretty manifestly denotes the whole system of christian truth, or the revelation of the doctrines and duties of the religion of Jesus Christ, for though this word is applied in several other senses in the sacred writings, it is also frequently used in *this*, as is manifest from too many passages to need any particular reference. It is also evident from the context that it is thus to be understood here.

When the Apostle saith, ‘I have not *shunned* to declare unto you all the counsel of God,’ his meaning is, that he had made use of no deceitful glosses, double meanings, or designing ambiguities of expression, in order to secure himself from the disgrace and sufferings of the cross; that he had not ‘corrupted the word of God,’ or ‘handled it deceitfully,’ but that he had, in a plain and intelligible manner, ‘commended the truth to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.

This sense is still farther confirmed by the universal term *all* in our text. ‘I have not shunned

shunned to declare unto you *all* the counsel of God.' It was not our Apostle's manner to preach up those doctrines only which he perceived were acceptable to his hearers, and to keep back whatever might expose him to their censure: far from this! When he is (on another occasion) speaking of this *too common* practice, which is adapted to please and gratify unsanctified men, he rejects it with abhorrence; and then adds, 'If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.'\*

However, this universal term *all* must be understood with some limitation, because, to declare *all* the counsel of God, in the most strict and universal sense, is a work by far too difficult for men, or even for angels to attempt. For these grand things contained in the counsel of God, they are still '*desiring to look into*.'†

Indeed God alone, to whom all his works are known from the beginning, is fully acquainted with this most extensive and glorious plan, and has a perfect comprehension of it.

When therefore, the Apostle speaks of his having declared to them '*all* the counsel of God,' he must be understood of all with which he was acquainted, and which they were able to receive, agreeable to his declaration to them in our context—'I kept back nothing that was profitable to you.'

Let me proceed to observe then,

The faithful minister is one who has obtained an experimental acquaintance with chri-

\* Galat. 1. 10. † 1 Pet. 1. 2.

christianity. One who 'counts all things but loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.' He sets out with a single eye to the glory of God and the best good of his fellow men; his first concern is to know and live the religion of the gospel himself, and, in 'all things, to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour,' and to 'act worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called.' And then (having obtained proper satisfaction that he is, in some degree, qualified for, and called of God to, the work of the gospel ministry) he freely and solemnly giveth up himself to the service of God in this *good work*, esteeming it an invaluable privilege that he *may* be put into the ministry; for he fully joins with our Apostle in declaring 'to me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ.\*

Having counted the cost, he has deliberately made his choice 'to take up the cross and follow the Lamb whither soever he goeth,' and in a view of the various trials and sufferings which await him, he is ready to say with the Apostle in our context, 'None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I might finish my course with joy; and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

In his study he converseth much with God,

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with

\* Eph. 3. 8.

with his bible, and with his own soul, and bears the interest of Zion and the people of his charge on his heart at the throne of grace.

He \* giveth himself to reading, meditation and prayer, and studies to show himself approved of God, a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.'

He is ' not a *Novice*,' but a scribe, in some good measure instructed into the kingdom of God, so as to be able to bring out of his treasure 'things new and old.'\*

He examineth his own opinions, as well as the opinions of others, by right reason and the word of God ; and this is his *motto*, 'to the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.'†

The greater his literary knowlege, and the more he hath trod the circle of the sciences, the better ; but divinity is his favorite study, and the word of God is the man of his counsel. He gains all the light and instruction which he can from authors, whether ancient or modern, without calling any man *father* ; and weighs controversial writings in the balance of the sanctuary. And while on the one hand he is far from affecting *the low singularities of a party* ; he will not, on the other, be allured by the flatteries, or awed by the frowns of the most revered names on earth to depart *one ace* from the simplicity which is in Christ. He is fixed in his determination to follow the Lamb whither soever he goeth ; and though

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\* Mat. 13. 52. † Isa. 8. 20.

he is very glad of company on the way, he will not turn aside for the sake of the most respectable characters among men.

He will love those, for the truth's sake, whom he sees walking in the truth; he will be *gentle* towards all men, in meekness instructing those who oppose the truth; and he will 'be ready to give a reason of his hope,' as well as of his faith, to every one who asketh him, in a suitable manner.

The christian preacher not only teaches his people in public, 'but from house to house.'\* In his ministrations he is serious, deliberate, laborious and zealous; for he remembers that he 'watches for souls as one who must give an account.'† In his preaching he affects not, to play the orator or show his hearers how gracefully he can act his part; but, in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power he commends the truth to every man's conscience in the sight of God. Therefore his discourses are sound, sentimental and weighty, and his manner (as it ever becomes the pulpit) manly, solemn, and pathetic.

As he cometh to his people with a determination to know nothing among them but a crucified Saviour, so the doctrine of the cross makes the principal figure in his preaching. This is the centre to which every line in the whole circle of his sermons apparently tends. Therefore his discourses will not be stuffed with the dead image of dry morality, the noisy  
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\* Acts 20. 20. † Heb. 13. 17.

din of controversy—a mere appeal to the passions and imagination, or with the learned unmeaning lumber of the schools.

On the contrary, he views the importance of every doctrine, as it is more nearly or remotely connected with the cross of Christ, or the doctrine of his atonement, for in this he still glorieth to the exclusion of every other object. Therefore he will inculcate the truths of natural religion in order the better to support, explain, and enforce the doctrines of supernatural revelation.

The christian minister will find it necessary in the course of his preaching, to adduce some of the various and mighty evidences of the *Being, Perfections and Glory of God*; and to touch upon several branches of natural religion, consequent to this great fundamental truth; that he may thereby prepare the way for a clear, full, and plain vindication of the truth and divinity of the gospel, which must by no means be omitted.

That the gospel is no cunningly devised fable, every true christian knows, and every christian teacher should be able to prove.

The truth of divine revelation being established, a wide field opens to view, an inexhaustible treasure is disclosed, from which the christian preacher will bring forth things new and old. Not indeed because they are either new or old, but because they are the invaluable truths of the divine word. And as on the one hand he will not build his faith on the opinion

opinion of others, however good and great ; so on the other, he will not advance any thing out of the common road till he has well examined, and is convinced that he hath a divine warrant for it : yet he will be concerned so to preach that both he and his hearers ‘may grow in grace, and in the *knowlege* of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.’ He will therefore dwell with particular attention upon the most distinguishing doctrines of the christian revelation ; such as, the supreme moral excellence and perfection of the divine character and government ; the original state of innocence and rectitude in which man was created by his God ; his present undone condition, and his *total moral depravity* by nature, in consequence of the first apostacy ; the righteousness of the divine sentence of condemnation to transgessors ; and the absolutely hopeless condition of man without a mediator.

The christian preacher, however, will not stop here, but will proceed to lay open the divine plan of redemption and salvation for sinful man. For this purpose he will bring into view the sublime doctrine of a *triune Deity*, or the Trinity in Unity in the one undivided Jehovah, a doctrine of no small importance to a right understanding of the mediatorial plan.

He will expatiate, with humble admiration and delight, on the high and glorious character of the Mediator as ‘God manifest in the flesh ;’ the covenant transaction between the

the Father and the Son, respecting his undertaking in the work of our redemption ; the mysterious glory of the incarnate WORD, and his obedience, in our nature, to death, even the death of the cross ; by which he made compleat reconciliation, or atonement for sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness : his glorious resurrection, and exaltation to be head over all things to the church, that so he might be both prince and saviour to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. He will teach the doctrine of the purchase and descent of the Holy-Ghost, for the application of redemption (by his special agency) to the souls of his people ; to be a sanctifier, guide, and comforter to them, as well as to reprove (or convict) the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.

And thus he will exhibit as in one view, the joint co-operation of the adorable *Three in One* in the œconomy of our salvation. He will keep in view the doctrine of the divine sovereignty in the salvation of sinners ; the *supernatural* agency of the Spirit in regeneration ; the doctrine of free justification, by faith through the righteousness and atonement of Christ ; the nature and necessity of christian holiness, 'without which no man shall see the Lord,' and the several branches of christian doctrine herewith connected.

The christian preacher will not fail to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation to perishing sinners, and to invite them, in his Master's Name,

Name, to comply with the overtures of divine grace ; he will urge and beseech them to be reconciled to God, by the various and mighty arguments which the gospel furnisheth, by arguments drawn from the supreme excellence and perfection of God's character and government ; from his right in and over them, as creator and preserver—from the excellence of holiness and the malignity of sin—from the stupendous love and grace of God in the gift of a Saviour, and the great salvation which he freely offers, and as freely gives, through the atonement of Christ to all who are willing to be saved in that way—from the consideration of death, judgment, and eternity—from the unutterable felicity, the pure, uninterrupted joys, and eternal glory of the saints in heaven,—and finally, from the most aggravated sin, and future eternally unabating torments of impenitent unbelievers, in that world of wo, ‘ where their worm shall never die, and their fire never shall be quenched ’\* Knowing the terrors of the Lord he will persuade men with bowels of the tenderest pity and concern, and even ‘ pray them in Christ’s stead to be reconciled to God.’†

He will also address the wicked in a manner suited to their several characters, whether profane, stupid, formal or awakened ; but his addresses will all terminate in ‘ testifying’ to sinners of every character ‘repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ.’§

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\* Isa. 66. 24. Mark 9. 44—48. † 2 Cor. 5. 11—20. § Act. 20. 21.

The christian preacher will, moreover, be concerned to give proper instructions and directions to the children of God, according to their several degrees, circumstances, trials and comforts ; he will be careful to feed the 'sheep and lambs' of Christ's flock ; and he will be careful also that he feeds them with nothing but 'the sincere milk of the word,' as being alone suited to promote their growth in grace, and in the knowlege of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The time would fail me to be more particular here, let me say in a word, he will not shun to declare to his hearers *all the counsel of God*, so far as he is able to explain and they to understand it ; he will (in the best manner he is able) lay open the whole system of the doctrines and duties of the christian religion ; he will be concerned to keep back nothing that may be profitable to the souls of his hearers ; labouring rightly to divide the word of truth, and to give to every one a portion in due season.

In fine, however the christian minister may be defective in some of the natural or acquired embellishments, and exterior, though useful ornaments of preaching ; one distinguishing beauty will be conspicuous in his sermons, and that is, they will be animated with a holy zeal, flowing from a heart warmed with love to Christ, and the souls of his hearers, which will diffuse through his sermons, the truest sublime, and the most natural pathos.      IM-

## I M P R O V E M E N T.

It remains that we shut up the present discourse with a practical improvement, which shall be attempted in the way of address to the respective characters in this assembly.

And,

1. Both the subject and occasion lead me to direct the address to the Pastors of the Churches here present.

*Much respected fathers and brethren,*

Though I am the least of you all, I know you will expect no apology for the present address. When our great Apostle took his final farewell of the elders of Ephesus, there was an affecting solemnity in the scene, and a dignity of character in his deportment, which cannot be easily described, much less imitated by any but a good minister of Jesus Christ.

And when the christian minister is about to experience the final separation from his flock, he stands in view of both worlds: *Time* and *eternity* lie open before him. Then is a proper time to estimate the real importance of things, and the worth of characters. Then he will find the unspeakable comfort of being able to say 'I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare all the counsel of God.'

This most solemn scene, we who are the ministers of the gospel must shortly experience! This we should frequently call up to view, especially should it be real and present to our

minds at such an occasion as the present. Such is the connexion between the settlement of a minister with his people and his final separation from them, that the one naturally, and almost necessarily suggests the other to our thoughts, especially as his comfortable separation from them depends on the faithful discharge of his duty among them.

We have had a very imperfect sketch of the christian minister's character at this time, and we have engaged in this office, yea more, we are hastening to that final hour when 'all those among whom we have gone preaching the kingdom of God shall see our faces no more,' and we must suffer a final separation from the people of our charge, how solemn that hour!—yea rather how solemn and important our office, the good or bad execution of which will fill our hearts with a heaven of joy, or overwhelm us with an ocean of wo, in that final hour!—My brethren, let us study—pray and preach much, and give ourselves to the work of the ministry, lest when we have preached to others, we ourselves should be cast-aways!—We are engaged in a good cause, we serve a good master. We are hastening fast to our final period. And if we are faithful to the death, he will give us a good, a glorious reward, even a crown of glory which fadeth not away.

As the servants of the loving and beloved Redeemer, let us love our people, and love  
one

one another ; and whatever trials may attend our work, let us join with united hearts to say, **None of these things move us, neither count we our lives dear to ourselves, so we may finish our course with joy, and the ministry which we have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God.**

I would now in a few words apply the subject in an address to him who is to be set apart at this time to the work of the gospel ministry in this place.

*Dear Sir,* You are now about to transact with God and this people in matters of the most serious importance : the souls of this flock are, this day, to be committed to your charge ; and you must give an account of your stewardship. If any of them perish through your neglect, you must answer it to your master ; for thus the divine declaration runs. **“O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel ; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me. When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die ; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hands. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked from his way, to turn from it, if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity ; but thou hast delivered thy soul.”\***

These are the terms, my brother, on which you

\* Ezek. 33. 7, 8, 9.

you engage in this great work.—O put your trust in God then, and by incessant prayer and unabating faith, secure his gracious presence, direction, acceptance, and blessing, that you may be an able, faithful, and successful minister of the New testament; that when the approaching solemn hour of your final separation from this people comes, you may be able to say, ‘I call you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.’

Let me next address you my brethren of this church on the occasion of this joyful solemnity.

Happy after all your divisions, and trials, to see this day!—thrice happy if you continue steadfast to the end. Take heed therefore that ye fall not out by the way. Love one another—love your pastor, but love Christ above all.—Esteem your minister highly for his work sake, assist him with your prayers, receive the counsel of God from his mouth, practise it in your lives, and follow him in all things wherein he followeth Christ—and learn, by happy experience, how good and ‘how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity,’ that when you suffer a final separation from your dear pastor, and one another here on earth, it may be with the well-grounded, joyful expectation of reuniting beyond the grave, to sing the new song to him who loved you, and washed you from your sins, in his own blood. Fi-

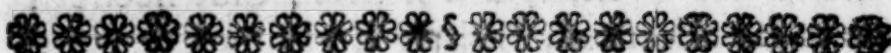
Finally, as a summary conclusion to this discourse, I would offer a few words to this whole congregation.

*My dear Hearers,* We who are the ministers of the gospel, are bound to declare to you all the counsel of God; and it is at the risque of your immortal interest, if you neglect or refuse to hear and embrace the truth as it is in Jesus. Therefore let me tell you in a word, you are the workmanship of the great all-perfect Creator, and the sinful offspring of apostate Adam: by nature you are the children of wrath, because children of disobedience. There is, there can be, no hope in your case, but only through a crucified Saviour—He is able to save to the uttermost, all who come to God by him. And he invites, beseecheth and commandeth you to come, and promifeth eternal salvation to all who truly comply with his benevolent call. *Therefore,* ‘To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts: for behold *now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation.’ Even the solemnities of *this day* are designed as one mean of your spiritual good. Oh! see to it then, that you do not turn *this* grace of God into licentiousness, but hear that your souls may live—for I do this day, in the name of my great Lord and Master, testify to every one of you, repentance towards God, and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ. *AMEN.*



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## THE C H A R G E.

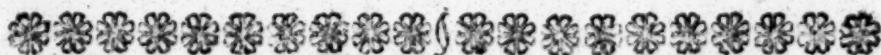
WE being satisfied in your regular call and qualifications for the great and important work of the gospel ministry, and being furnished with ability from Christ the King and Head of the church for this purpose, and also being regularly called thereto by this church, do now, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed and glorious Head of the church, separate thee, JOEL BENEDICT, to the work of the gospel ministry; to labour in Christ's vineyard, and to be a pastor of the church and people in this place. And we give thee charge in the sight of God who quickneth all things, and before the Lord Jesus Christ, that thou take the oversight hereof, not of constraint, but of a willing mind, not for filthy lucre; and that thou pursue the design of the gospel ministry, in watching for souls as one that must give an account. Thou art sent forth to preach the gospel—preach therefore the word, be instant in season, and out of season; instruct, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine. In this matter labour to approve thyself to God, and to the consci-

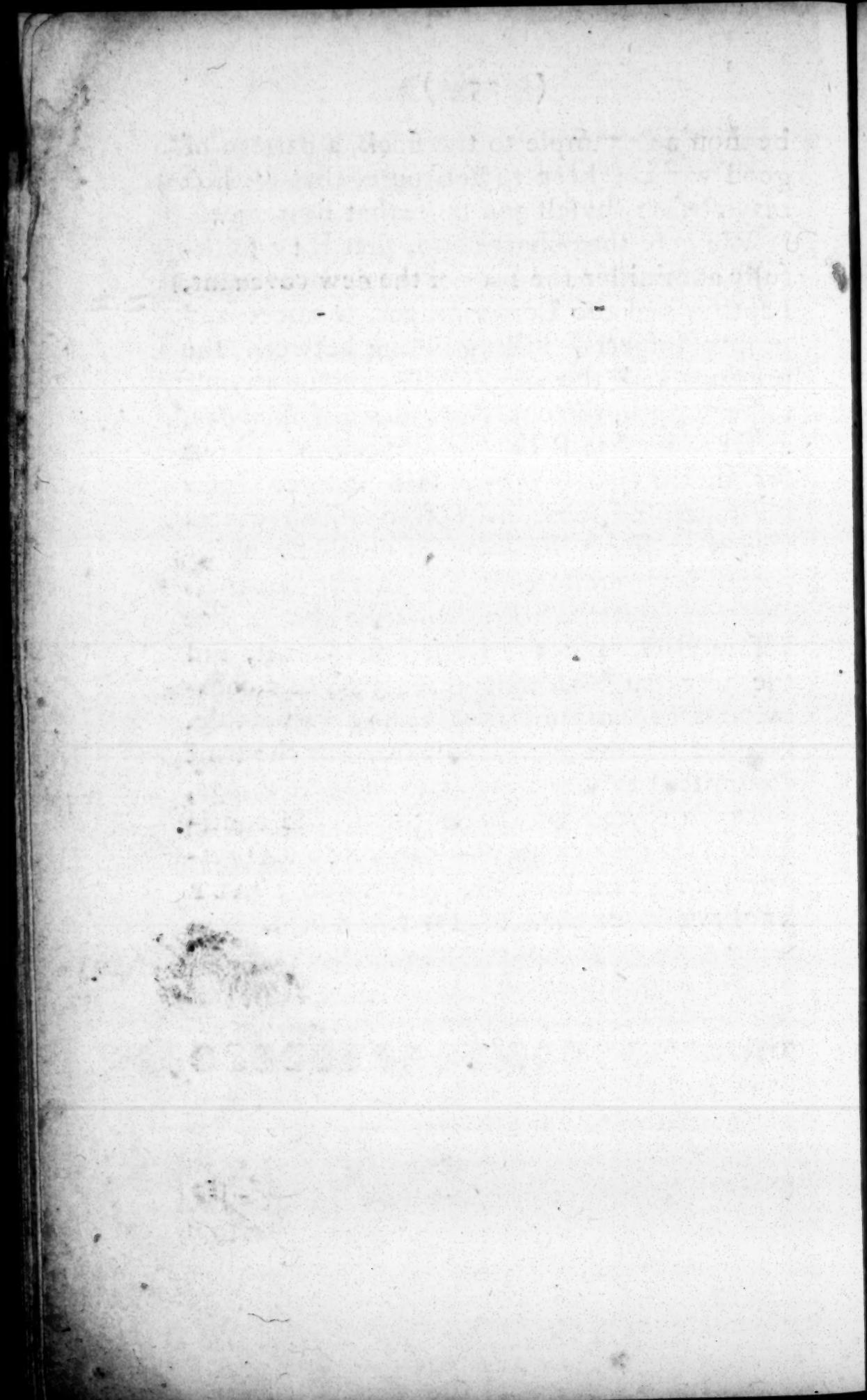
consciences of men, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, and giving to each one his portion in due season, as a good and faithful steward of the mysteries of God. Take heed unto thy doctrine ; hold fast the faithful word, and speak the things which becomes sound doctrine. Be not ashamed of the gospel, nor shun to declare the whole counsel of God ; but teach the way of God in truth, not caring for any one : And have thou a due regard unto all committed to thy charge ; give all diligence to instruct the ignorant, to awaken the stupid, and to comfort the penitent ; preach the doctrine of the fallen sinner's *total depravity*, the necessity of regeneration by the *power* and *grace* of God, and of repentance toward God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.

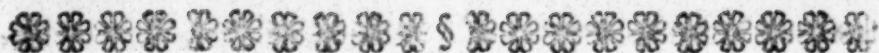
Also preach free justification by the imputation of Christ's perfect righteousness, and that our comfortable access to God is only through faith in his beloved Son ; and that all who believe in Christ must maintain good works, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour. And from a principle of love to Christ, feed his sheep, feed his lambs. And we give thee charge that thou take heed to thyself, as well as to thy doctrine. Flee whatsoever is unbecoming a man of God, or a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ ; but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace ; be

be thou an example to the flock, a pattern of good works ; keep thyself pure, that so thou mayest save thyself and those that hear thee.

We give thee charge also, that thou faithfully administer the seals of the new covenant, baptism and the Lord's supper, to meet and proper subjects, distinguishing between the precious and the vile. Also exercise thyself to keep up in the church *pure gospel discipline*, as far as in thee lieth, for edification and not for destruction. Never lord it over God's heritage ; on some have compassion, others save with fear. Rebuke before all the obstinate sinner ; restore with a spirit of meekness the true penitent. And now we charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the holy Angels, that thou keep this commandment without spot and unrebukable. Neglect not the gift given thee, nor the trust committed to thee : meditate on these things, and give thyself wholly to them, and continue in them to the end—**BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO THE DEATH, AND THOU SHALT RECEIVE A CROWN OF LIFE.** Amen.







THE R I G H T H A N D o f  
F E L L O W S H I P.

LOVE is the foundation of happiness to rational beings, who are formed for society and mutual intercourse. This is the temper in which the happiness of heaven will essentially consist, and which will glow with incessant ardor, in the breasts of ~~the~~ <sup>its</sup> inhabitants, and fill them "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." When therefore the church of Christ on earth is united in this bond, when the members of his body are thus joined together, they are a resemblance of "the general assembly, and church of the first-born in heaven," who are all united, not only to their common head, but unto each other, by that "love which abideth forever," by that "charity which never fails." "Behold then

" then, how good, and how pleasant it is  
 " for brethren to dwell together in unity!"  
 And as the churches of Christ, in their  
 militant state here, are appointed to exhibit  
 an example of the graces of the christian  
 temper, of which this of love is the chief;  
 so it is of importance that this union should  
 take place amongst them, that they may  
 comfort and edify, may strengthen and ani-  
 mate each other in a growing conformity  
 to the image of their Redeemer and com-  
 mon head, " 'till they all come, in the  
 " unity of the faith, and of the knowledge  
 " of the Son of God, unto a perfect man,  
 " unto the measure of the stature of the  
 " fulness of Christ;" And it is of equal  
 importance that this union should take  
 place between the ministers of Christ, to  
 whom the dispensation of grace is com-  
 mitted, that they may strengthen the hands  
 of each other in their common work, and  
 may be a " good example unto believers"  
 in charity and love. Thus it was in the  
 primitive days, when religion prevailed in  
 it's genuine purity. This temper of love  
 reign'd in the hearts, and shin'd forth in  
 the lives, of the followers of Christ. It  
 united christians to each other as brethren  
 in Christ, and children of the same Father.  
 The ministers of Christ were united to  
 each other, by this bond of union, which  
 they manifested by every proper token of  
 mutual

mutual affection and fellowship, as occasion required. So when any were about engaging in this work, and were to be sent forth as labourers into the vineyard of God, the others gave them the *right hand of fellowship* as a token of their united concurrence, fellowship, and love. Thus was it done to the great apostle, when he was sent forth "to preach amongst the Gentiles" "the unsearchable riches of Christ," agreeable to the account which he himself gives. "And when James, Cephas, and John, "who seemed to be pillars, perceived the "grace that was given unto me, they gave "unto me and Barnabas the *right hands of fellowship*, that we should go unto the "heathen, and they unto the circumci- "sion."

And agreeable to this ancient token of union and fellowship, which is left upon record "for our learning" and imitation, I do now, in the name and behalf of my brethren and the churches here present, give unto you, dear sir, *this right hand*, as a testimony of our most cordial union with you in the bonds of our common Lord, and of our fellowship and concurrence with you in the work to which you are devoted and solemnly set apart. By this token we certify you that we will be ever ready to treat you as a minister of Christ, beloved in the Lord, by all acts of christian love,

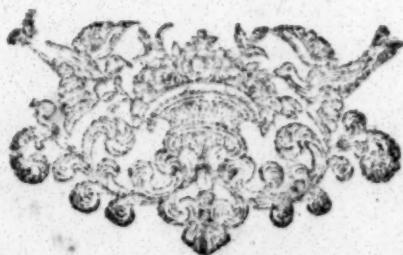
Love, honor, and esteem which God, in his word, requires towards one that bears such a relation to us. By this token we certify our cordial love and union to you, and also to the church committed to your care; engaging that we will, in the strength of divine grace, regard and treat you and them as members of the same body of which we are members;—that we will ever bear you upon our hearts to the throne of divine grace, and constantly recommend you to that fountain of grace in the gospel of Christ, which is the foundation of all our hopes;—that we will be ever ready to afford you all that assistance, by counsel and otherwise, which God of his grace, shall enable us to impart, and your circumstances may require from time to time;—requesting the same things of you, as occasion may require, and promising to receive your counsels and admonitions with all that readiness which God shall direct and require of us in his word.

We wish a blessing to the church committed to your care. We wish a blessing to you, dear sir, and that you may obtain mercy of the Lord to be faithful, that when “the chief shepherd shall appear, you may receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away;” that both you and we may be gathered into the kingdom of our ascended Redeemer, and, by an everlasting bond of

of union, may be made "perfect in one  
" with Christ, as he is in the Father, and  
" the Father in him."

*E R R A T A.*

Pag. 7. line 1. for those, read these—line 9 & 10 from bot.  
for designing, read designed. P. 24. line 5. for mitteries,  
read mysteries—line 7. for becomes, read become.



20 JY 63

